

Dear Dave,

11/1/91

An idea that had been taking form led me to listen to both Christian Monitor evening newscasts and an hour of NPR's, which allowed time for some of the net newscasts and the ^{Neil} MacLehrer Report. I've been thinking and now I believe that there is a Bush/Arab strategy for a deadlock that will lead Bush to take control, one way or another, resulting in this business tilting against Israel.

The Monitor pretended to recount the historical background, for which it began World War II time! It then said that as of that time the population of "Palestine" was overwhelmingly Arab ^{this} and it would still have been true if ^{the} Palestine ~~then~~ ^{red to} reference had been limited to the less than 25% of it that today is not Jordan. That Trans-Jordan was created from most of Palestine was not once mentioned. Also unmentioned was the fact that as of then Jews were half the population of Jerusalem.

The two MacNeil-Lehrer experts were both anti-Israel, one an Arab.

Today's Post has very limited excerpts from the speech texts. It is likely that all today's NYTimeses will not be sold at a place I can ~~the~~ get them, where I'll be before ~~the~~ tomorrow's Times gets there, and if it carries the full texts I'll get it and send you its coverage. I do think that if you can you'll want to keep the news accounts, however biased and limited they are, because I regard this as a major historical event, one that can lead to another Holocaust, always a possibility, no matter how remote, and now more of a possibility because of Bush's shift ⁱⁿ of traditional US policy.

I think that on the Arab side Syria set the tone and the firm policy - Israel gives up everything in return for which it gets nothing. I believe it is not likely that Syria will change its position or that, if Bush makes a real effort, he'll be able to persuade or compel it to. (Which will also draw it and Iran even closer than in recent years they have been.)

I have a suspicion that the Post edited out of what Shamir said what I think he did say about the historical background. This would be consistent with its policy of not providing any historical understanding for its readers, include in the administration and the Congress. most of whom I presume are ignorant of it.

I've highlighted a few things that tend to confirm my belief, if not analysis, which I think it is, of the coming Bush domination of this process. I've also highlighted one of Shamir's comments, urging the Arabs to use the universities in Judea and Samaria. These, I think five in number, were, as I recall, established by Israel. When Hussein controlled that territory he made no improvement but did start to build himself another castle on a Jerusalem hilltop that I think the Israelis are keeping in its unfinished condition.

For the first time that I can remember the Post did leave words ^(Shamir's) in that state the fact that the PLO's charter still calls for ending the state of Israel. It is a single sentence ^{that} ~~that~~ Readers will have to be alert to ~~get~~ ^{get} its meaning.

This is an ugly charade. The language of the two UN resolutions is quite specific in including the requirement that Israel have security in ^{any agreement} ~~the settlement~~. There is not talk about how this can be, the reason being that it cannot be. Even if, as is not true, the Muslim states were to agree to this, even to want it, they cannot deliver it because they have already lavishly financed those terrorist groups that are unalterably opposed to it. And, within the past week or so, both Iraq and Iran have called for wiping Israel out, for a holy war against it and for the assassination, Iran at least, of all Muslims participating in this conference.

So, those groups that will not change will be able to see to it that Israel does not have the secure borders and the peace envisioned in those UN resolutions. The Muslim states not at the conference include those who are unalterably opposed to any Israeli state and who have financed, meaning providing most of their considerable income, those terrorist groups that will see to it that Israel has no peace. My understanding is that most of this money came from Saudi Arabia, which remains opposed to any Jewish state. It and the Gulf sheikdoms, all extreme authoritarian states, also own a considerable hunk of both the US and its debt. They perhaps are continuing to increase their share of our debt. This means, for Bush, ~~that he has to worry~~, as he continues to increase our debt with his world-policeman militarism, that he has to worry about their unloading what they hold, whether or not as I think it means he has to worry about their not buying more if it. The Muslims can precipitate for him a monstrous financial debacle.

So, as I see it, the one thing that can be regarded as good is that nobody has walked out. But that really means nothing. The Syrians have already signalled that this can have no conclusion of which they (and by this I do mean not they alone) are not part and they will not be part of any agreement that does not ultimately threaten the existence of the State of Israel.

The one now unpredictable factor I can see is how the escalating and now talked-about domestic catastrophe wrought by Reagan and Bush, will influence Bush when he has no choice but to at least seem to confront it.

He has regarded his Presidency as having no purpose for him other than his reelection. (Which, of course, requires policies those who finance him approve.) I see no likelihood of his changing on this and little likelihood that he will other than Willie Horton his foreign as well as his domestic policies, meaning voluntarily.

However, it is not impossible, although it is a remote possibility, that as he sees his domestic, including political needs, he may have to make some changes.

But if he does there is no possibility that I can see of his persuading Syria, Iran, Iraq, the emirates, Libya and other such authoritarian states to go along with him. They do not want a democratic and socially-minded Israel to exist or for their peoples to see what an Israeli-type state can mean for them. Or, no present justification for any real hope for a meaningful settlement or a meaningful peace for Israel.

11/2/91-Instead of reading before going out for the papers (at 2:30) I note that for their purposes the Arabs are winning the p.r. battle inside the US, with the complicity of the major media. I attribute this to the major-media support of the administration's policies. Yesterday afternoon and evening, having heard an earlier account of CBS net ~~radio~~ news, I listened/saw its, Christian Science ~~Monitor~~ Monitor, PBS, ABC and NBS local and net evening news and the MacNeil-Lehrer report. With but one exception, NPR, all made it appear that Shamir had gratuitously attack Syria as a terrorist and oppressive regime. Which, of course, is it. Not a single one, including NPR, has throughout, and I was watching for this as a clue to the media's abdication of independence, has yet mentioned that Syria remains on the US official list of terrorist states.

As I believe I noted yesterday, Syria had gone after Israel viciously in its opening speech. That, too, was not mentioned, although it would have been a reasonable interpretation that Shamir was responding to that. However, what he was making direct response to was a new assault on Israel as a terrorist state in a Syrian statement to the press. NPR alone carried that as recorded when the Syrian spoke. It is to this that Shamir responded. And, no reporter wondered how it was that Syria went to a "peace" conference, intending to move toward peace at it, with a copy of an ancient British wanted flyer on Shamir as a youth, alleging he participated in an unsolved alleged crime, killing Count Bernadotte. *Nobody reported his denial contemptuously, is there.*

What Shamir is doing and has been doing is I think, quite respectable and daring. He has been and he continues to make the statement that he will respond to hard-ball pressure as he sees fit and that he will not be intimidated by ~~it~~ ^{them}. This is what he has been doing in response to each of the many earlier pressures by Bush/Baker and it is what he did at Madrid. His response in each instance was to start new settlements where Bush and the Arabs did not want them. That is his kind of hard-ball and as I think about it I do not think of any ^{other} way in which he could respond as firmly and as meaningfully. He is saying each significant time that he will not be intimidated and as the conference, where he is outnumbered, one against the rest, including the US in the rest, he will not be intimidated.

I think this expresses his view of Israel's survival need and much as I dislike Likud and all terrorists, which he clearly was as a youth, I agree that Israel's survival does require the kind of actions and positions he has taken. Especially when the Arabs are demanding new concessions from Israel while refusing to make any, unless the Palestinian expression of limited agreement with the Camp David accord, which they could have had that long ago, might be regarded as a concession.

Today's Post has less coverage although the paper is thicker on Saturdays, although the main news section is not. Its coverage is consistent with what I say above and it also hints at the suggested need for Bush to take over and preside. Which is what Hedrick Smith said last night on PBS ' Washington Week. Along with this no story I'm aware of reported that with the possible exception of the Palestinians and to a lesser degree Jordan and Egypt, no Muslims want any peace agreement and Iran at least continues demanding the killing of all Arabs at and agreeing to this conference.

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Middle-East Peace conference/ major media analysis, commentary, resumed 11/3/91

Today's Washington Post to a large degree confirms what I've been writing but on whether Syria's hard-ball intransigence serves US policy may be disputed by allegations that it was seeking benefits from the US. This does not necessarily refute what I said.

The story is not on this Sunday edition's front page. In fact, it is not even in the main news section. It is in the second section, with ^{two stories beginning} ~~a story on page 21~~ on page 21. There is a single Outlook article.

Syria's expectation of a reward from the US is the first sentence in the lead of one of these stories. It is repeated in several ways, including with the use of similar language. That Syria also seeks a veto is stated in different words by the Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, which has begun to display some independence from Syria.

Tending to confirm my analysis that the US intends to dominate this conference it professes it had not tried to influence, a rather large lie as it relates to Israel, an unnamed US official says "There will be a role for the United States to bridge gaps, to be a driving force, and to get them over the humps." How this can be done without pressure or bribery I cannot see. Or, it ~~means~~ means the US will control the conference.

As I noted earlier, there was almost universal ^{media} misrepresentation ^{about} of the trading of insults by Syria and Shamir to make it appear falsely that Shamir ~~had~~ started it ~~was~~ when the opposite was true. How that the ^{to Israel} public-relations ~~damage~~, which can be serious within the US, is an accomplished fact, the Post sublimates the truth and the evidence of its dishonest reporting that served only to further the administration's agenda, anti-Israel. It and virtually all others said Shamir began it. This story says, "Perhaps the week's most dramatic demonstration was the Syrian display of aggressiveness toward Israel and ambitions for Arab leadership." Aside from it being clear in context that Syria's attack on Israel and Shamir on Thursday was the beginning of that insult-trading, this story, not by a Post Washington staffer, continues with what again makes it clear that Shamir's attack on Syria was his response: "Israel made clear that it will respond to Syria's aggressiveness" ~~with~~ when "Shamir answered Charras's tough talk with equally provocative charges."

What may or may not be related and may or may not have been ordered by Israel of its supported South Chinese Army is reported (AP) on page 23. It was reported ^{earlier} that Israel had ordered about 10,000 Lebanese living near the line of its "security zone" to leave the area. Israel denied it, not reported in the electronic reporting I heard/saw. Indications are that the pro-Israeli Lebanese did it. Israeli officials ~~claim~~ claim it "had requested a halt" in that operation. The Post's subhead is "These are means Israel resorted to in order to blow up the peace process," attributed to an unnamed Syrian "spokesman." What was long before this obvious and the Post reports in these stories is the fact that it was Syria alone that ~~jeopardized~~ jeopardized the conference, yet the Post uncritically headlines this false statement that is prejudicial propaganda.

Jim Hoagland's oped piece also is specific in saying that Syria's Charaa started the personal attacks and that Shamir responded when he accused Syria of being a terrorist state. More, Hoagland wrote that Shamir "avoided the most inflammatory ~~language~~ rhetoric on Thursday" and his Friday attack was in response to Syria's *Thursday*.

If Syria extorts anything from the US in return for not quitting the conference it will be amazing because it ~~does~~ ^{Syria} not dare wreck the conference and take that blame, the blame ~~its~~ ^{it} has sought to attach to Israel, the project ~~in which~~ virtually all the US major media ~~unanimously~~ supported knowing full well ~~that~~ ^{it} ~~is~~ ^{is} false.

I've just heard the NPR 9 a.m. news. Syria and its controllee Lebanon refused to attend the scheduled meeting with the Israelis. The Jordanian-Palestinian delegation did keep its appointment.

To today no Post story includes the fact that Syria is on the official US list of terrorist states, abnormal particularly after the exchange of insults with Shamir which ~~is~~ ^{is} Syria initiated and inflamed.

There is no way in which ~~the Post's burying~~ ^{Syria's} the truth about which it headlined ~~its lie~~ ^{report} can undo the harm its dishonest and openly partial reporting did at least inside the US. The truth is not obvious in these today's stories. The belated truth can be used in the future by the Post to pretend its was fair and balanced reporting, which it wasn't.

It remains to be seen whether the Bush administration is anxious enough for the appearance of a success in this conference to permit itself to be blackmailed by Syria, to which under Bush it has been cozying up. Giving Syria anything except strong ~~language~~ ^{reproof} will be a signal to the other Arabs, encouraging them to seek what Shamir cannot accede to. Or, it would help wreck the slight possibility of this ~~process~~ ^{process} proceeding further, ~~which~~ ^{proceeding} would require Syria's participation in which its conduct would have to be different.

as of now it seems ~~that~~ ^{that} most forces have been asserted in an effort to about the conference and make it appear that Israel is responsible for it.